1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

to eat in public, will be served by himself in the *etambo* (spirit-hut). With the decline of the *onjango* as an institution, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage. As might be expected, this has affected boys more directly than girls. Girls and young women of the present generation and of the generation now coming on are, on the whole, more given to customary usage and forms of civility than are boys and young men. It is probable that contacts with Europeans, which have been going on for more than 150 years, have produced a number of individuals and families who have paid less heed to correct usage and have neglected to teach children properly, but never has there been the wholesale disregard which is now encountered. If the analogy of the South African Bantu peoples is any criterion, a reaction back to things Umbundu may soon be expected. Some observers feel that it is already under way.

Little direct sex teaching is attempted, but the very fact of the sex division of society is a considerable factor.

'A mother will teach her daughter saying, A girl does not play with boys, for boys are sharp ones.[1] Don't play with them. This advice is because of sex, although the child may not understand it at the time. But when the boys call her, she will remember the advice of her mother and may quickly reply, saying, My mother says, Don't play with boys: they'll hurt you. Thus she has taken to heart what her mother has told her and may go ahead in the same way. But as she grows up and separates from her parents,[2] then she may separate herself from their teaching.' Young children acquire incidentally a good deal of knowledge about sex both from other children and from adults. Although adults observe considerable reticence in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children, living as they do with their parents in one-room homes, it is inevitable that sexual intercourse should sometimes be observed by children.[3] Although euphemisms of speech are employed in the presence of children, all the true terms are known by them. Hetero-sexual play is not in vogue.

[1] *Imelĕli*, lit. sharpened stakes such as those used at the bottom of a pit-fall to trap game.

[2] i.e. at adolescence, when she leaves her mother to stay with other girls of her age.

[3] Cf. Father Van Wing on the Congo child: 'A six ans . . . il en emporte une connaissance de la vie qui ferait rougir de bons jeunes gens d'Europe' (op. cit., p. 262).

862 "The practice of leaving the ocisemba in the village by day makes his elder sibling[1] responsible for much of his education....She herself may not be more than six or seven years old and consequently cannot be expected to 'educate' her charge very thoroughly. She interests herself in his walking and talking and he will initate her in many things."[2]
863 General instruction in cleanliness begins at this age, although sphincter control may have begun much earlier, since the mother feels every movement made by the baby on her back.

145 After weaning the physical development of the child proceeds more slowly than that of European peoples, and Childs believes that this may be due to deficiencies in diet.[3]

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

857 From the time a child is able to walk until he is about nine years old he continues seeing the same people as before, but he becomes less de-
861 pendent upon the elder sister or cousin who helped him, and begins his life-long association with his age-mates. The sex-division of society starts for him at this stage: from about eight years boys begin to eat in the *onjango* with their fathers, girls continuing in the kitchen with their mothers. After about eight years the father becomes largely responsible for the education of boys, the mother for that of girls. During this period the child's education may be summarised under three heads:

869 (a) *Psychological*, chiefly fear of real or imaginary dangers. This is imparted by mother, elder siblings, and perhaps by a grandmother; there is a tendency for the teaching of fear to be done by women.[4]

867 (b) *Social*, chiefly usages of etiquette and acquaintance with the kinship structure and its requirements. A child of about eight is supposed to know his social status and all the etiquette that pertains to it. In the *onjango* the hierarchy of age is observed, honoured guests and old men being served first, and so on all down the line. With the decline of the *onjango*, there has been a great decline in the teaching of etiquette and social usage, and this naturally affects boys rather than girls.

● 864 Little direct sex teaching is attempted, and adults are reticent in speaking of sexual matters in the presence of children. But since children live with their parents in one-roomed houses, it is inevitable that children should sometimes observe intercourse.

868 (c) *Training in skills*: Children are taught few definite skills before the age of eight or nine, but many of their games are in imitation of adult activities.

604 From the age of six or seven years children are usually sent to spend
857 one or two years with the mother's brother. They may also be sent to the father's sister or brother for a period, and, in the case of girls, to the mother's mother. Formerly prominent families sent their children for a

(1) Either a brother or sister may act as nurse.
(2) Childs, op.cit., p.95. (3) Ibid., p.97.
(4) Childs actually writes " 'the side of the basket' " (p.100), but seems to be referring simply to female relatives.

577 Lying is strongly disapproved and the liar is called *ohembi*. The Ovimbundu appreciate hospitality (*unu*) which also means generosity. A man who is hospitable is said to be *ongavi*. Greediness, which is disliked, is described by the word *oku sapa* ("to be greedy"). There are standards of honesty in sales and exchanges. A deceiver in trade is *ohembi*.

836 With regard to the relation of the sexes in early years it may be said that, in spite of boy and girl friendships, and the communal sleeping of boys and girls at the home of one of the girls, a man expects to marry a virgin, a point which has been dealt with in describing marriage ceremonies.

Naturally there is a difficulty in obtaining precise information respecting the details of these nocturnal gatherings of boys and girls. Ngonga said that girls inform their parents concerning the house where the night is to be spent, and there is a point of etiquette requiring that girls must not go to a house where boys are staying together.

• 864 Standards of conduct already described under courtship are a result of direct teaching by parents. Marriage rules and a classificatory system of relationships, with its prohibitive decrees, are taught in the home, in the men's council house, and at initiation ceremonies where such exist. In addition to these sources of instruction there is no doubt an unconscious absorption of ideas and standards. The power of suggestion is always at work through everyday examples.

831 Apart from demands made by tribal custom and direct instruction there are variable personal standards of modesty. Ngonga states [562] that many lascivious stories are told among men, and when the men are drunk, they tell these to women. "Sometimes the women laugh, but the good women do not like to hear these tales."

576 643 565 A male commoner when meeting the king bows low, extends his arms, claps his palms and says, "*ohosi* ["lion"] *akuku* ["grandfather"]." Only the old people follow the ancient custom of falling on their knees when greeting the king. The Ovimbundu never were in the habit of doing more profound obeisance, but the Vangangella, when greeting one of their kings, rub their chins on the ground and place dust on their chests. Even at the present day a woman or child of the Ovimbundu is expected to kneel when greeting a king, but such an acknowledgment is not now usual in greetings given by a male commoner. The reply of the king to the commoner is "*kalunga*." This word enters into greetings of all kinds. The literal meaning of the word is "the sea," "king," "god," or "death," but the interpretation

3; Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

881 mony at which the older initiates dance while the novices clap their hands.

[292] I witnessed the dance of initiated boys at Ngongo, where the costumes resembled those I had seen at Katoko. At night a youth brought for me a set of initiation costumes (Plate LXXVIII, Fig. 1), which resembled those worn during the dance; this he did with great secrecy.

While at Ngalangi, the initiation of girls was investigated. After several days of negotiation with a village headman three female guardians of the girls came from the bush. The illustrations (Plate LXXVII, Figs. 1, 2) show the attitudes of these women and their decoration. There were three male drummers in the orchestra and several women, who sang and clapped their hands. On emerging from the bush the females moved toward the orchestra with their backs toward the players. As there were about two hundred yards to cover, this slow backward movement occupied a long time, since the three women did not take more than a few inches at each step. The dance [535] itself was a slow, shuffling, swaying movement, made while the bodies of the performers remained inclined forward and their heads were bent so that it was almost impossible to see their faces. The [302] women wore no clothing except loin cloths. Each female was plastered from head to foot with alternate bands of red and white clay smeared thickly. These three females are the women who act [864] as instructors for the girls during isolation in the bush where they receive sexual and domestic instruction.

881 The seclusion of girls covers a period of one month. During 304 this time the novices suffer no harsh treatment though an operation is performed, possibly excision of the clitoris, but I am not certain on this point. It was also stated that a corncob is introduced into the vagina. The tribe practising this ceremony for girls was the [171] Vanyemba, living close to the Ovimbundu at Ngongo near Ngalangi in central Angola.

881 In order to corroborate further the two accounts of initiation 171 ceremonies for boys I journeyed to Cangamba in Moxico, eastern 304 Angola. The position of the two first centers visited (Katoko and Ngongo) is on the border line where Ovimbundu and Vachokue mingle, and although there is a mixture of these and other tribes at Cangamba, the culture, language, and physique of the Vachokue predominate. A description of the circumcision ceremonies witnessed at Cangamba is given below for comparison with the accounts resulting from visits to Katoko and Ngongo.